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GREEK AND LATIN GLYCONICS

BY

LEON JOSIAH RICHARDSON

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GREEK AND LATIN GLYCONICS

BY

LEON JOSIAH RICHARDSON

The ancients held conflicting views, as is well known, concerning the meters of lyric poetry. The doctrine of *metra derivata*,¹ disseminated among the Romans by Varro, Diomedes, Bassus, Marius Victorinus and others, differed widely from the conceptions of Greek writers like Aristoxenus, Aristides Quintilianus, and Hephaestion. This lack of agreement results mainly from differences of method and aim. A Greek metrician, for example, when analyzing a lyric verse, usually sets forth a metrical plan consistent with the rhythm. His formulation is likely to serve as a practical aid for a reader or singer. A Roman metrician, on the other hand, dealing with a similar verse, is likely to be less concerned with the rhythm as felt by the poet than with the origin of the verse-form. This is implied in the name *metra derivata*.

For a modern student the evolutionary aspect of the verse (even if it were correctly set forth) is of small interest in comparison with the question of how poets actually read their odes. This brings up the problem with which we are here concerned. Is then Roman theory valid for Latin poetry as Greek theory is for Greek poetry? Did Catullus and Horace differ largely

¹ See Gleditsch, *Metrik*, 1901 edition, pages 70, 73, and 248. Also Schroeder, *Horazens Versmasse*. Page 15 of the latter work contains the following statement: "Massgebend für ihn [Horaz] war eine ihm vornehmlich durch Varro vermittelte Theorie, die weder mit dem Leben noch mit echter Gelehrsamkeit irgendwelche Fühlung gehabt hatte. Aber diese Theorie, so musenverlassen sie war, beruhte doch auf richtiger Beobachtung des Tatsächlichen, und so verhält sich denn auch Horaz in seinen Neuerungen bei weitem nicht so willkürlich und stilwidrig zu den Lesbiern, als z. B. Euripides."

from Sappho and Alcaeus in the way they felt the swing and flow of a given verse? Perhaps these questions will never be fully answered. Much however is being learned from a careful and detailed comparison of the four primary elements involved in the problem, namely Greek theory, Roman theory, the text of Greek poetry and the text of Latin poetry. In the present study an attempt is made to throw further light on the subject by re-examining Greek and Latin Glyconics. Examples of the verse are:

reddas incolumem precor (Hor. *Od.* i, 3, 7).
splendidas quatunt comas (Cat. lxi, 78).

The method of investigation here followed consists largely in noting the distribution of diaereses and caesuras—always an important clue to verse structure. It does not seem necessary for our purpose to extend inquiry beyond the poets named in the following table.

TABLE I

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
		1st syl.	2nd syl.	3rd syl.	4th syl.	5th syl.	6th syl.	7th syl.	8th syl.	
Alcaeus } 1. Sappho } Anacreon }	87	25.2	50.5	63.2	32.1	33.3	42.5	4.5	91.9	3.64
2. Sophocles	132	38.6	56	59.8	25.7	27.2	65.1	26.5	92.4	3.91
3. Euripides	182	40.1	53.2	57.6	19.7	39	59.3	19.7	72.5	3.60
4. Catullus	200	27.5	28	62	13	48.5	61.5	3	99.5	3.68
5. Horace	164	39.6	53	46.3	27.4	39	52.4	1.2	100	3.59

The foregoing table is to be read as follows. Column A shows the number of verses selected for investigation: 87 from the poems of Alcaeus, Sappho and Anacreon; 132 from Sophocles; and so on. Columns B–I show the relative frequency of breaks. (The term *break* is used to mean diaeresis or caesura without distinction.) For example, a little over 40% of the verses of Euripides begin with a monosyllable (see column B), in 28% of the verses of Catullus a word ends with the second syllable (see column C), 100% of the verses of Horace show diaeresis after the eighth syllable, and so on. Column J shows the average density of the verses. The index number in each group is the total number of words divided by the total number of verses.

By this test it appears that the five groups are strikingly similar to one another.

Breaks within the verse occur most frequently in three places. In the case of groups 1, 2, 3, and 5 these places are after the second, third, and sixth syllables. In the case of group 4 the places are after the third, fifth, and sixth syllables. It is noteworthy that Horace (group 5) conforms to the Greek poets.

TABLE II

GROUP 1 Alcaeus Sappho Anacreon	GROUP 2 Sophocles	GROUP 3 Euripides	GROUP 4 Catullus	GROUP 5 Horace
2 6 9	2 6 16	23 6 13	1 3 6 29	2 5 14
3 7	23 6 11	2 6 12	23 6 15	23 6 13
3 6 5	3 6 9	3 6 12	2 5 14	1 3 6 12
1 3 4	1 3 6 5	12 6 11	1 3 56 13	1 3 5 11
1 3 6 4	123 6 4	1 3 6 7	3 5 12	3 6 9
234 4	234 6 4	1 3 5 7	2 6 12	2 4 8
23 6 3	34 6 3	23 6	3 6 11	4 8
2 5 3	1 3 56 3	2 56 6	3 56 9	2 6 7
23 5 3	23 6 3	123 6 6	1 3 5 8	23 5 6
3 5 3	2 56 3	23 5 5	2 56 8	12 4 6 6
23 3	1 3 7 3	3 5 5	4 7	1 4 6 6
345 3	1 4 7 3	1 6 4	23 56 7	2 56 5
3 56 2	23 7 3	23 7 4	23 5 6	4 6 5
2 56 2	3 5 7 3		1 4 5	3 5 5
23 5 7 2	2 67 3			12 6 5
12 4 6 2				3 4

This table, which shows the dominant combinations of words in the verse, is to be read as follows: "2 6 9" in group 1 means that a Glyconic having breaks within it after the second and sixth syllables occurs 9 times in Alcaeus, Sappho, and Anacreon; "2 5 14" in group 5 means that a verse having breaks within it after the second and fifth syllables occurs 14 times in Horace; and so on.

As a rule, the word-combinations of marked frequency in the Greek verses are likewise frequent in the Latin. Exceptions are "4," "23 56" and "1 4" of Catullus and "2 4," "4" and "4 6" of Horace. All these forms however actually occur in the Greek, though only rarely. On the whole the outstanding fact is the similarity of the Greek and Latin Glyconics.

Throughout the rest of this discussion the symbol G will be used to represent the Greek view concerning the structure of the Glyconic:

oo--|----

And similarly the symbol R will represent the Roman view according to the derivation theory:

--|----|---

Our problem then may be restated in the form: Were Latin Glyconics written under the influence of R, or of G, or of both?

FIRST AND SECOND SYLLABLES

A break after the first syllable of the verse is a caesura under either G or R. It is employed, as we should expect, with about the same degree of freedom by all the poets. (See table I.)

A break after the second syllable, under G, cuts the initial meter in the middle; under R it is a diaeresis after the first foot. This break has about equal representation in groups 1, 2, 3, and 5. (See table I.) Catullus alone shows a definite variation. With him about one verse in four shows the break. With Horace every other verse on the average shows it, which squares exactly with Greek practice.

Reference may here be made to the initial quantities of the verse, the two unregulated syllables. The Greek poets incline toward beginning the verse with two long syllables, though either of them may be replaced by a short syllable or both of them may be replaced (rarely) by short syllables. Catullus follows the Greek usage, except that he begins no verse with two short syllables. Horace begins all verses with two long syllables, except one (*Od.* i, 15, 36), which has at the outset the form of a trochee.

THIRD AND FOURTH SYLLABLES

A break after the third syllable is a caesura under either G or R. It gives an agreeable effect and is freely employed (See table I.)

A break after the fourth syllable, under G, is a diaeresis occurring between two meters; it is not objectionable, according to Greek usage, unless employed with some frequency. Under R it is a feminine caesura; such an effect is generally limited by

the relation of sound to sense. Apart from the rare break after the seventh syllable, this is the least numerous break in the verse. In Catullus the percentage is quite low. Horace however falls into line with the Greek poets.

If we turn to the poems of Catullus and look at the verses concerned, we find a strong pause after the third syllable in three cases, the fourth syllable being in effect a proclitic:

complexum. sed abit dies	(lxi, 105).
gaudeat. sed abit dies	(Ib. 112).
neglegit. sed abit dies	(Ib. 192).

The break in another is obscured by elision:

qualis unica ab optima	(Ib. 221).
------------------------	------------

In another the break is bridged by close grammatical agreement:

suave olentis amaraci	(Ib. 7).
-----------------------	----------

Similarly in Horace two of the verses concerned have a proclitic as the fourth syllable, e.g.,

nocturnis ab adulteris	(iii, 16, 4).
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In two others the break is followed by a word of enclitic nature, e.g.,

non sum qualis eram bonae	(ii, 9, 1).
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In six cases the break is bridged by close grammatical agreement, e.g.,

me nunc Thressa Chloe regit	(iii, 9, 9).
velox mente nova? quibus	(iii, 25, 3).

In all the cases cited the break after the fourth syllable is hardly felt.

Compare in this connection the Phalaecean verse of Catullus (the first eight syllables of which, considered as a quantitative series, are identical with those of the Glyconic). A break after the fourth syllable is here also conspicuous for its rarity. It occurs in 8.9 per cent of the verses (forty-eight cases), but upon examining them we find that in eight cases elision minimizes the break, in five cases the break is followed by an enclitic and in one case the fourth syllable is proclitic. This leaves only thirty-one breaks unsoftened by purely formal devices, while in some of these a rhetorical device, e.g., a strong pause after the third

syllable, tends to make the break less obtrusive. The avoidance of a break at a certain point in a verse is highly significant. By way of illustration select a representative group of Greek or Latin verses like any of the following:

paene insularum, Sirmio, insularumque	(Cat. xxxi, 1).
novaeque pergunt interire lunae	(Hor. <i>Od.</i> ii, 18, 16).
paterna rura bobus exercet suis	(Id. <i>Ep.</i> ii, 3).
iucunda captat praemia	(Id. <i>ib.</i> ii, 36).
truditur dies die	(Id. <i>Od.</i> ii, 18, 15).

In such verses a break after the fourth syllable will be found to be comparatively rare. This is due primarily to a structural condition; that is to say, the break separates one metrical division from another. If it were often used, it would injure the flow of the verse. The same cause accounts for the infrequency of this break in the Phalaecean and the Glyconic. In the latter verse, accordingly, whether Greek or Latin, the true metrical divisions are as set forth in G. It is of course possible, as some assert, that Catullus and Horace were led by contemporary scholars to accept R as an explanation of the origin of the Glyconic. Even so, they composed their verses according to canons implied in G.

FIFTH SYLLABLE

A break after the fifth syllable, under G, is a caesura; under R, a diaeresis. Let us here bear in mind a principle of classical Greek metric similar to the one cited in the foregoing paragraph. Caesuras tend to outnumber diaereses in the initial and middle parts of dactylic verses of any compass and of trochaic and iambic verses of less than tetrameter compass. The flowing quality of the verse is in this way enhanced. Classical Latin poetry written in these meters shows the same usage. Why should the Latin Glyconic be an exception to the rule? Especially since under G it is similar to trochaic and iambic verse in character, or under R it is dactylic. A Roman poet then, writing Glyconics under the influence of R, would seemingly have avoided the frequent use of this break. Horace however employed it with much the same frequency as did the Greek poets; Catullus uses it somewhat more often.

Particularly significant are verses with breaks after both the second and fifth syllables. One would naturally suppose that if Roman poets wrote Glyconics of the R type, they would avoid this pair of breaks, inasmuch as they produce a diaeresis after each of the two opening feet and thus involve coincidence of thesis and word-accent in those feet. But what are the facts? Verses having this pair of breaks (either with or without other breaks) are common. Their relative frequency in the five successive groups is: 13.7%, 14.3%, 17.5%, 20%, and 21.9%. This arrangement, as is here seen, became progressively more in favor. The Roman poets outdid the Greeks in the usage. It is therefore hard to believe that Catullus and Horace felt the metrical divisions of the Glyconic as set forth under R.

SIXTH SYLLABLE

(a) A break after the sixth syllable is a natural one under either G or R. It is employed freely by all the poets. Verses ending with a dissyllabic word abound. Their relative frequency in the five groups is:

41.3% 56% 52.1% 61.5% 52.4%

(b) Verses having breaks after the third and sixth syllables (with or without other breaks) abound. Their relative frequency is:

22.9% 39.3% 30.2% 44.5% 25.6%

(c) Verses having breaks after the second and sixth syllables (with or without other breaks) abound. Their relative frequency is:

24.1% 58.6% 34% 22.5% 29.8%

(d) Verses having breaks after the second, fourth and sixth syllables (with or without other breaks) are rare. Their relative frequency is:

5.7% 6.8% 2.7% .5% 6.7%

(e) Verses having breaks after the fifth and sixth syllables (with or without other breaks) are rare. Their relative frequency is:

8% 11.3% 12.6% 21.5% 9.1%

(f) Verses having breaks after either the fifth or the sixth or the fifth and the sixth syllables (with or without other breaks) abound. Their relative frequency is:

67.8% 81% 85.1% 89% 82.3%

This material enables us to draw the following inferences: (1) The Roman poets are similar to their Greek predecessors. (2) But in every line of figures Horace is nearer Greek standards than is Catullus. (3) By reference to *b* and *c*, it may be observed that verses broken after the second and sixth syllables are more common than those broken after the third and sixth syllables in every group, except in the case of Catullus. (4) The low percentages in *d* seem to be due to G. For verses written on that plan and often divided in the manner indicated would over-emphasize diaeresis. (5) By reference to *e*, we see that Catullus alone is fond of closing a verse with the word-combination *monosyllable dissyllable*. (The next to the last word may be a dissyllable with its ultima elided.) For example,

lusimus satis. at boni (lxi, 232).

This peculiarity accounts for the large figure opposite the name of Catullus in column F of table I. See also the last paragraph before table II. (6) The derivation theory predisposes us to look for a main caesura in Latin verse. According to an ancient writer, *omnis versus κατὰ τὸ πλεῖστον in duo cola dividitur*. Latin Glyconics however do not emphasize a main caesura more than do Greek Glyconics, as may be seen by reference to *f*.

SEVENTH AND EIGHTH SYLLABLES

Breaks after the seventh and eighth syllables call for little comment. Sophocles and Euripides often allow a word to run from a Glyconic into the next metrical member. In these two poets therefore the disparities appearing in columns H and I of table I do not indicate any abnormality in the structure of the verse. Catullus and Horace are in close accord with Alcaeus, Sappho, and Anacreon in the terminal portion of the verse.

CONCLUSION

However widely the derivation theory was accepted among Roman scholars, we find no convincing evidence that Catullus and Horace were much under the sway of it in writing their Glyconics. Individual bent is sufficient to account either for the comparatively small number of breaks after the second syllable of the verse in the case of Catullus or for the fixed quantities of the first two syllables in the case of Horace. Possibly the misleading effects of the current theory were for them offset in part by some contact with orthodox teaching. During his residence at Athens Horace certainly did not miss altogether the older traditions of Greek learning. This may explain why his verse is in certain technical points closer to the Greek than is that of Catullus. At all events they had both read attentively their Greek models. Doubtless from this source primarily they acquired their feeling for the Glyconic and its component parts. Their work, as we have seen, is in remarkable accord with Greek standards. It follows that we are justified in reading the Latin Glyconic according to the metrical plan of the Greek prototype.

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